

Fall 10-2014

# Holy Cross Choirs Newsletter (October 2014)

Choir, College of the Holy Cross

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# Holy Cross Choirs Newsletter

October 6, 2014

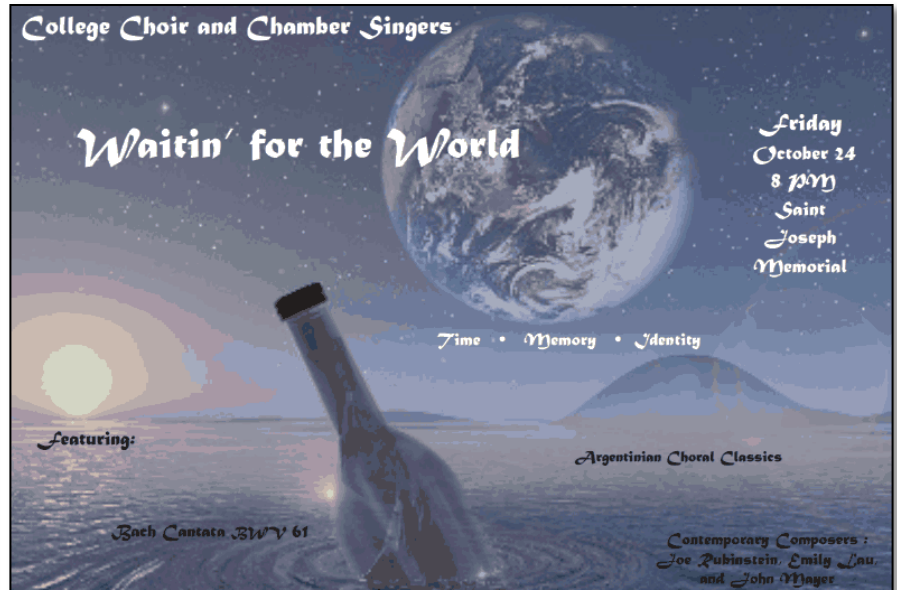
## Waiting' for the World

On October 24, 2014, the Holy Cross College Choir and Chamber Singers present their concert, "Waitin' For The World." This concert brings forth a vast repertoire, ranging from songs by notable Argentinian composers to Bach, and even includes contemporary choral pieces and John Mayer's "Waiting on the World to Change." The stylistic differences that mark this concert demonstrate how music has the ability to unify the world in an indefinable way.

Throughout the semester, Director David Harris has encouraged members to write and post "message to the world" cards. By doing so, Choir members have found themselves actively thinking about the overall theme of the concert. The purposes of these cards are not only for amusement, but also for reflecting on our personal impact on the world.

As a whole, the repertoire that the College Choir and Chamber Singers will perform sets forth a diverse vibe, yet represents how impactful music from around the world can be.

*Emma Garaban, '17*



## Calendar of Performances

### *"Waiting For The World"*

10/24/2014, 8:00pm

St. Joseph Memorial Chapel

College Choir and Chamber Singers with Matt Jaskot, accompanist, a guest string quartet, and percussion

### *The Music of Chris Willcock, S.J.*

11/23/2014, 3:00pm

St. Joseph Memorial Chapel

The College Choir and Chamber Singers perform with Schola Cantorum and Abe Ross '16, organist.

### *Campus Tree Lighting*

12/04/2014, 5:30pm

Chamber Singers

### *Advent Service of Lessons and Carols*

12/11/2014 8:00pm

St. Joseph Memorial Chapel

College Choir and Chamber Singers with the Holy Cross Chamber orchestra, Abe Ross '16, organist, and the Holy Cross Alumni Choir

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Vocologist Laurel Mehaffey shows Adam Ouellet '16 his singer's formant on a spectroscope

### ***This one time, in Choir Week***

A week prior to most students' arrivals on the Hill, the Chamber Singers returned to campus in order to attend the choir's very first Choir Week. Dedicated to learning some of their more challenging repertoire for the year, including the highly challenging *A Man Said to the Universe*, the choir devoted 8 hours a day to the pursuit of musical excellence. Each day, the group not only studied this year's repertoire, attending to the pitches and the spirit of each individual piece, but also began learning vocology, or the scientific study of the voice. To aid in their understanding, vocologist Laurel Mehaffey worked with the group, presenting a different component of vocal health and technique each day that the choir could then apply to their repertoire.

To conclude the week, the Chamber Singers participated in three performances showcasing their progress: Mass of the Holy Spirit, President's Banquet and First Year Convocation. The highlights of these performances included not only the world premier of Norm Gouin's *Suscipe*, but a rousing performance of The Songs of Holy Cross that left everyone warmly offering the first standing ovation of the year.

Perhaps most importantly, however, was the bond built between them; it provided a tangible energy recognizable to any given audience to this day.

*Julia Dunn, '16*

### ***Empire State of Mind***

On Tuesday, September 30, 2014 the Holy Cross Chamber Singers and director David Harris traveled to Brooklyn, New York where they performed a small selection of songs at the River Café, located next to the Brooklyn Bridge. They were invited to sing for a private event by a Yale alumnus who has taken a liking for the Holy Cross Choirs. At least one Holy Cross alumnus was present, and effusive.

The Chamber Singers performed several pieces from this season's repertoire, featuring David Harris' arrangement of *Daniel Saw the Stone*, an Argentinian classical piece called *Gala Del Dia*, John Mayer's *Waiting On The World To Change*, and *Bright College Years*, a traditional Yale song. After enjoying dinner at the Cafe, the Chamber Singers were asked to perform an encore. They sang selections from the *Songs of Holy Cross*, as well as Lady Gaga's *Edge of Glory*, featuring alumni soloist Catherine Mikula, '14.

After performing, the Chamber Singers crossed the Brooklyn Bridge on foot and entered Manhattan, where they visited One World Trade Center and the 9/11 Memorial. The group stopped for a moment of silence before giving a small, impromptu performance of Sven-David Sanstrom's *To See a World* and *America the Beautiful* on site.

*Phil Losquadro, '18*



Chamber Singers at the River Café

### **Consider having the Holy Cross Choirs sing for you!**

Are you hosting a Christmas party? Maybe you have another event at which singers would boost the profile, and for which you'd like to make a donation to the choir? Choral music changes events, and the choir is trying to raise money to help everyone participate in the Argentina tour. That sounds like a Win-Win!



# Alumni Corner

## Homecoming, 2014

By Catherine Mikula, '14

*Under sunny skies and in front an enthusiastic crowd, current and past member of the College Choir showed their Purple pride by singing the Songs of the Holy Cross for the homecoming football game on Saturday, September 27, 2014. Since last year, the College Choir has made it a tradition to sing at homecoming as an opportunity not only to broadcast the group's tremendous talent on campus, but to bring back choir alumni still wanting to show their Crusader spirit. Holy Cross is infamous for its dedicated alumni and those who once belonged to the College Choir are no exception to this fact. Catherine Mikula, Class of 2014, discusses her return to Mount Saint James to sing with the choir for homecoming. – Adam Oullet, '16*

"I walked into the rehearsal space on 88th and 2nd much like I've walked into every rehearsal space for the last 15 years: exhausted, drained, wiping my face of the meal I'd just scoffed down so I wouldn't be starving during the last half hour of singing. (What is it about life that leaves us seemingly permanently exhausted--and what is it about singing that seems to remedy this??) We sang through a few movements of the piece we are performing in a month and when we paused to take our usual break, Kent put the conductor's baton on the stand and stayed on the platform, looking at us. He gave us his smile: "We come here to let all the stress of the day out; to be with each other and share space and song. What's happening out there," he says, flinging his arms out to cue the rest of the world, "doesn't compare to what's happening in here." I sat there grinning like a kid in a candy shop because I knew he was right.



*College Choir and Alumni sing with the "Goodtime" Marching Band*

Last weekend, I returned to Mount Saint James for Fall Homecoming. As one of the most recent graduates of the College, it felt on the whole more like I was late for the first four weeks of school and less like a returning to the days of college gone by--but I was looking forward to a weekend of catching up with friends, walking around campus and spending some time away from the hectic-ness of post-grad life. At the top of the list was joining the College Choir in singing at the football game on Fitton Field. We planned to rehearse in the morning and then reconvene for the game later on--Per usual, I was running late for the am rehearsal. I got a call from work first thing that morning, an author on tour was having issues with something and it was my job to fix it. Twenty minutes late for a half hour rehearsal, I ran into Hogan 514, sweating and upset (and hungry). No sooner had I walked in the door but David swooped over with a hug and some music, the rest of the alumni gathered offered hello's and smiles, and we kept going, talking about our plans for Alumni involvement and what the group had meant to all of us over the years. Amazing, that people so different found strong commonalities in this group of singers. My work crisis was 300 miles away in New York, handled and therefore unimportant--it didn't compare to what we were doing in there. Down on the field a few hours later, we stood there together, hoping we were with the band and on the right part of the Songs of Holy Cross and just generally thrilled to be there. Singing at Holy Cross has always been this way for me--and for a lot of people, I imagine. An opportunity to invest in each other and our talents, and disconnect from all the extraneous things in our lives for a few hours. Going back to the Hill to join this amazing group of Crusaders reminded me not only of why I joined in 2010 but why I stayed, and continue to stay.

Our break is over, and Kent brings us all back into the next movement to tackle. He looks at me and I feel engaged and ready to sing-- I know he is looking at everyone and silently checking in with us all before lifting the baton to begin. I'm so grateful for a leader who cares enough to do that. I blink and it could be last year, surrounded by undergrads and David at the helm, about to begin a piece in Brooks. I'm not there--but I am, and they are most definitely here with me."

## Alumni, are you interested in singing more with your Holy Cross family?

*We alums are forming an affinity group with the goal of forming an official Holy Cross Alumni Choir directed by David Harris. The first opportunity to join is at Lessons and Carols this year and on tour with the choir in Argentina in the spring. If you're interested in singing, or helping the group form, contact Adrian Fekula at [adrianpfekula@gmail.com](mailto:adrianpfekula@gmail.com) and put "Alumni Choir" in the subject.*

*-Catherine, Catherine, Adrian, and Christina*



Buenos Aires, Argentina, where the College Choir will present their 2015 choir tour.

## From the Chair

### *Goals for the year*

As a result of his work with the group, director David Harris radically transformed the College Choirs into a group not only “out with the frock and ready to rock,” but more well-rounded and appreciated both on and off campus. Yet, much as our talent increased and we established a functioning mission statement, there was still work to be done and energy to corral. While to some degree, this is inevitable, David and the E-Board heard the discordance and decided to harmonize the notes into a more pleasing experience: a new reality of a tightknit, accomplished, familial Holy Cross singers, who together come to new understandings not only of music, but of the world around them. To further this immersion, the choir is exploring choral music in a variety of different languages including German, Latin and Spanish culminating the first international choir tour in seven years.

Julia Dunn, '16  
Choir Chair

Alumni and friends, the school is raising money to help all of our singers attend the Argentina tour. If you are interested in supporting this effort, please contact David Harris, [jdharris@holycross.edu](mailto:jdharris@holycross.edu) for more information.

## Putting the [æ] back in *Argentina*

For the first time in seven years, the Holy Cross College Choir will be embarking on a full concert tour in May of 2015. The choir will travel to Argentina, where they will perform in Buenos Aires and Cordoba. The latter city is home to the oldest church in Argentina, San Ignacio Church, which the Jesuits built there in the 17th century. The Choir will conduct four concerts, during which time they will be immersed in the daily life of each local community. The members hope to engage Buenos Aires and Cordoba in active cultural exchange, including opportunities for service, and to come home having received and imparted better cross-cultural understanding through music. In preparation, our singers have tirelessly rehearsed music from across Argentina's vibrant choral repertoire.

Alumni are invited to participate in this exciting opportunity, and may contact David at [jdharris@holycross.edu](mailto:jdharris@holycross.edu) for more information.

## Celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> in Song

**Sunday, November 23, 2014**

On Sunday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Holy Cross College Choir, Abraham Ross '16, and the Schola Cantorum will join forces under the joint direction of Professor James David Christie (director of the Schola Cantorum) and David Harris (director of the College Choir) to premiere the *Mass in Honor of Pope Francis*. The mass, commissioned by the College for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the restoration of the Society of Jesus, will feature several pieces by Australian composer Christopher Willcocks, S.J. Included in some of the motets that the College Choir will sing is Willcock's setting of *The Prayer of Saint Ignatius*.

Max Lies, '17